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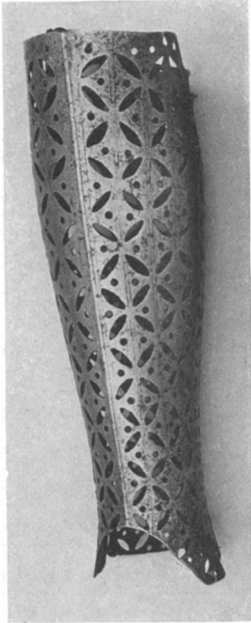
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the French designers of this period than Pineau's sketches in sanguine for woodwork and ormolu. They show mastery of the art of design and superb draftsmanship.

The central paneling on the opposite wall shows by contrast a distinctive wood treatment and approximates the work of Verberckt at Versailles and in the Hôtel de Soubise in Paris. The paneling has unfortunately been the victim of vandalism, but still retains the delicacy and



LEG-PIECE, ITALIAN  
XVI CENTURY

beauty that it must have had originally in the freshness of gilding and color. Among the wall panels there are no examples of the fully developed rococo style, but two alcove heads show the ornamental treatment used in a manner slightly more advanced than that illustrated in the paneled room.

Many have been the stern rebukes and savage criticisms that the style of Louis XV has received, both in its own time and since, but in it, to a greater degree perhaps than in the other periods, appears the real essence of French decorative genius.

M. R. R.

## RECENT SALES OF ARMOR

FRANCIS LATHROP, the painter, narrates that in his youth he asked an old trapper to tell him the best time of the year for hunting bear. "Bear?", said the veteran, "the season to kill bear is when the beasts are 'round!'"—a remark which Mr. Lathrop always applied with equal significance to collecting objects of ancient art. It applies especially, I think, to beautiful armor, for this comes into the shop or salesroom rarely. Indeed, collections of armor large enough and likely ever to be made the theme of a sale are few and far between. In France at the present day there are apparently but three collections to be placed in this category; scarcely more than six in England; in Holland none; in Switzerland two; in all Italy hardly more than two. In fact, during the past four decades one may count on his fingers such sales as the Spitzer (1895), de Cosson (1890, 1893), Londesborough (1888), Gimbel (1904), Hefner (1904), and Brett (1895).

Hitherto, in a word, the buyer of armor, whether for his private collection or for a museum, has been able to draw his breath, financially speaking, before the next sale came upon him. As a consequence of the war, however, this condition has changed, and within a short time no less than five important sales of armor have taken place in London alone. And it is about these that a few words may be said—which in a way are pertinent to the BULLETIN, since from three of them we secured important pieces for our gallery. The first of the sales took place in April, 1920, and the fifth, in 1921, in the beginning of July.

The first sale included the objects gathered by the late Sir Guy Francis Laking, Keeper of the Armories of Windsor, of the Wallace Collection, and of the London Museum, critic of discretion, author of a great work on European arms and armor—and born collector. He knew where splendid objects lurked, and was ever angling for them. For one thing, his position was exceptional, as a member of the firm of Christie, Manson and Woods, best known among European auctioneers. His home

and his armor were in St. James Palace, where as armorer to the King he had an official apartment. Later he bought a villa in Avenue Road, in the northwest quarter of London, which he named Meyrick Lodge in honor of Sir Samuel Rush Meyrick, the early English collector and writer. In the sales catalogue there is a good picture of Laking's main gallery, showing a vitrine well filled with early helmets, beautiful in the *reflets* which authentic armor gives. Nearby were mounted a hundred or more sword pommels, objects of luxury in nearly every instance, striking in form and exquisite in workmanship. Complete suits of armor he had none, and his collection was not large numerically—about four hundred lots—but high in quality. An object of lesser value he might have bought, *faute de mieux*, but presently it drifted away into another resting place.

The Laking catalogue shows us, in special illustrations, such objects as early helmets, precious Gothic spurs, including the fellow of the "de Dreux" spur in the Riggs Collection, series of court swords, and pieces of armor which belonged to Philip II. As a result of the sale all of these have now found their way to the United States (Clarence H. Mackay Collection). The Museum secured three fragments (two ear defenses and a toe-cap) of the enriched armor which Charles V wore at Mühlberg, a beautifully etched and gilded colletin of 1590, a visor of a miniature topfhelm of 1280, a badge of fourteenth-century horse equipment bearing the crest of the Black Prince, several enameled bosssets of bridles (sixteenth century), an embossed gauntlet earlier from the Meyrick Collection, a visor etched by Pieter von Speyer, a second visor engraved in the style of Valentin Siebenberger, and finally, a portrait in armor, half-length, by Zuccherò, of William Devereaux, Earl of Essex.

The second sale dispersed the armory of Baroness Zouche of Haryngworth, one of the oldest collections in England. This was shown in the great hall at Parham, which all readers will recall who have thumbed the plates of Nash's Mansions of England. It was brought together by

Robert Curzon, the Baron Zouche of his day, who is still remembered as an adventurous collector in the '30's and '40's, author of *A Visit to the Monasteries of the Levant* (1849), and one-time Secretary of the Embassy at Constantinople. Much of his armor came from the armory of the Sultans when this material was swept out of its old home and sold by weight, it is said, on the quay at Constantinople. At that time (about 1840) an entire cargo of armor



SHOULDER GUARD  
ITALIAN, 1480

is reported to have been carried as ballast to Genoa. In any event, we have the evidence that Lord Zouche purchased most of this armor not in Constantinople, but in Italy, and used it as the main *décor* of his armory at Parham. It was romantically mounted for the most part, for those were the days when no "baronial hall" was complete without its crusading figures, which stood about either in niches or on heavy pedestals. The important part of the Parham sale, then, was the fifteenth-century or "Gothic" armor: there were four suits of it in all, very much made up, unfortu-

nately, by "old Pratt," the Bond Street armor dealer of the middle nineteenth century. But the genuine pieces which these suits contain were of great interest; and after all, if a Gothic suit turns up today with more than half of its elements authentic, the modern collector views it with respect and admiration. We may mention that all of these Gothic suits came to the United States. The same fate, however, did not befall a half-suit of tilting armor, which was bought by a well-known British (Glasgow) collector. Among the rarities of this sale which came to the Metropolitan Museum were the following: sollerets,

collectors from many countries. Here again a number of early helmets were sold, and we note especially the fine late Gothic suit (from the Beardmore Collection), a decorated hand-and-a-half sword, an important half-suit of engraved north Italian armor—all of which, it may be noted, came to this country, as well as one of the three highly treasured Highland claymores (Collections Hearst, Welch). A claymore, incidentally, is *not* the basket-hilted broadsword of Scottish regiments, but an early double-handed sword with quillons down-bent, usually terminating in a perforated ornament. At this sale the Museum ac-



CHAIN-MAIL SOLLERETS WITH  
MAXIMILIAN TOE-CAPS

beautifully designed, in chain mail, with fluted toe-caps; several pieces of Gothic armor, described and illustrated in technical works; a pair of defenses for the lower leg, ornamented by perforations—a type of armor known only, so far as I recall, in certain fragments in the Museo Poldi Pezzoli in Milan and in the national armory in Sweden.

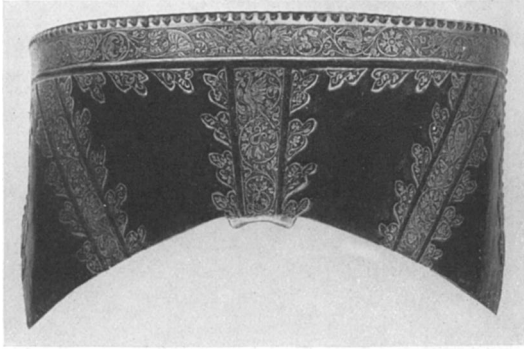
The third sale was the breaking up of the armory of the late Morgan S. Williams of St. Donat's Castle, Wales, who collected thirty or forty years ago. A number of his objects were "types" from the Beardmore Collection (1840); the rest he gathered through local antiquaries, and during frequent journeys to the Continent. He aimed ever to secure "primitives," and his collection had special merit in the eye of the expert. Hence his sale, while not large in the number of its pieces (scarcely more than three hundred), brought together

quired, among several lots, the pieces of engraved tilting armor which came originally from the Beardmore Collection.

The fourth sale, while the poorest from the view-point of the general collector, was of unusual interest, for it brought into the market the armor from Wilton House, Salisbury, which had been in the possession of the Earls of Pembroke since the sixteenth century. It included hardly a hundred pieces, but each piece had a sentimental value; it had belonged ever to the same family, which handed it out to its retainers in the stirring days of Henry VIII, Bloody Mary, or Elizabeth. In general, though, the armor impressed one unfavorably: it was of poor or half-way quality—a jumble of gauntlets and headpieces, odds and ends of arms and legs, representing, it is said, the residue of a vast armory which a Pembroke had ordered carried out and buried secretly in the time of the Civil War; armor which

was never recovered, and whose place of burial is now forgotten. An important object in this sale was an equestrian harness which I remember mounted on a high pedestal in the front hall of Wilton, the horse "manikin" an extraordinary affair

rerusseted (by varnish!) and the gilding of the somewhat worn etched bands touched up. At the auction this piece failed to bring the reserve placed upon it, and it will probably be returned to Wilton. The most important object in the sale was



CANTLE PLATE, GERMAN, XVI CENTURY

of sheet iron or block tin. The armor of the man is probably of Greenwich workmanship, showing splinted back and breast, a burganet with falling buffe, all parts with borders engraved and gilded. Armor for

a suit of armor made by the Queen's armorer Jacobe at Greenwich about 1585 for Henry Herbert, second Earl of Pembroke. It resembles closely one of the Scudamore harnesses now in the Metro-



CANTLE PLATE, SPANISH, 1515

the feet is lacking; this was doubtless of chain mail and provided with toe-caps in the Italian manner. The horse armor shows its late date, with small peytrel, and a curious croupière armored at the sides as though with round-shields hung at the cantle. It is a rare harness, and in good order—not without restorations, however, which date probably between 1840 and 1860, when the body of the armor was

politan Museum of Art: it has a similar headpiece, the same arm and thigh guards, ponderous shoulders, and slender legs, and it is ornamented similarly in bands richly engraved and gilded. In its heraldic decoration it is the richest known, covered with the blazonry of the house of Pembroke, of which no less than twenty-two coats of arms are pictured. From the sentimental view-point the present suit

is most important; it was made in the richest manner for a stately personage, brother-in-law of the King, Knight of the Garter and St. George, a great worthy in Elizabeth's affairs, brother-in-law of Sir Philip Sidney, Maecenas of artists and writers, and himself somewhat of a herald, as we see from his studies in blazonry which it bears. The sale of this splendid suit made no little stir in conservative circles in England, and efforts were made to secure it for the nation. In France or Italy, it would have been promptly sequestered as a national treasure; in London it passed duly to the highest bidder, Sir Joseph Duveen, who will presently place it in the American market.

The fifth sale dispersed the remainder of the Beardmore Collection, of which a number of specimens had already been sold in the Morgan Williams Collection. Here were two hundred lots of old provenance, most of them pictured in the folio catalogue (1844) of the Beardmore gallery at Uplands. Among the better pieces of this collection were a pistol buckler of the guard of King Henry VIII, a suit of tilting armor, engraved in bands, with several supplemental pieces, numerous enriched firearms, and, especially, a rare series of early polearms, English and Continental, including types which appear never before to have turned up at public sale.

B. D.

## A REMINISCENCE OF A POSSIBILITY

AS a contribution to the history of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, it is interesting to know that, as the following letter shows, nothing but a quarrel, presumably over a question of backsheesh, prevented the Museum from beginning its art collections with a number of important Egyptian antiquities. Thus chance undoubtedly determines the beginnings at least of many of our American art museums.

MY DEAR MR. ROBINSON:

I told you a few days ago about some of the adventures which my father (John Taylor Johnston), my mother, and I had

in Egypt in the winter of 1870, and you asked me to write down the tale as I had told it to you.

It was about January 1, 1870, that we sailed from Cairo in a dahabiyeh on our way up the Nile, where we visited the temples and other antiquities which a tourist was expected to visit. My father was intensely interested in all the wonderful things he saw, and as he was also much interested in Bible history, he read to us, as we voyaged up the river, those Bible stories which had any connection with the stories of the Pharaohs; especially was this the case with Rameses II, the Pharaoh, who as the Bible says, "hardened his heart" and "oppressed the children of Israel."

In due time we reached Luxor, where our first excursion was to the Tombs of the Kings. As our donkeys took us over this long ride we were much surprised to see on every side pieces of mummy cloth, long strips and small bits, some of very heavy cloth, some made from a coarse fibre of some kind, and some almost as fine and delicate as a pocket handkerchief. We could not understand where it all came from, as we had seen nothing of this kind elsewhere, and our donkey boys and guides professed complete ignorance.

In Father's diary he spoke of crowds of men and boys in this Valley of the Kings, with "scarabei, small idols, coins, etc." He was finally persuaded to buy an amulet and some bead necklaces which he ascertained later, rather to his surprise, were genuine.

At Luxor we found a United States consul, Mustapha Aga by name, and he introduced us to a Mr. Smith, a dealer in antiques, who had lived in Luxor for over ten years. The latter visited us on board and told us that he had a great many extraordinary things for sale which he would like to show us. We were nothing loath but we were rather amused by the caution and mystery with which Mr. Smith introduced us into his darkened house. This house was, I think, built of mud like the native houses, except that it had a second story. He left us below while he climbed the steep stairs to "open the windows" but when we ascended we found